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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

File No/R

888

DATE: August 2, 1954
5:16 p.m.

SUBJECT: Trouble in Guatemala

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador John E. Peurifoy - Guatemala City, Guatemala
Assistant Secretary Henry F. Holland

COPIES TO: U - General Smith
ARA - Mr. Woodward
MID - Mr. Neal
MID - Mr. Leddy, Mr. Fisher
CIA - Mr. Frank G. Wisner

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Ambassador Peurifoy telephoned to say that he had just come from the Junta and reported that there is a regular Army Major Sosa in command of the troops at the Air Base who refuses to surrender. He has 800 men under his command. Col Cruz, Appointed Ambassador to the U.S., has now gone out there to negotiate with him and try to get the cadets to leave. If the cadets leave then the rest of the Army will attack the base tonight. He said it would be a combination of Regular and Liberation Army forces. Amb. Peurifoy said there had been fighting all morning, but that a truce was declared from one until five o'clock (expiring seven o'clock Washington time)

Ambassador Peurifoy said it was not necessarily a Liberation action; it was a sort of revolt within the Army. In reply to Mr. Holland's inquiry he said he didn't know of anything we could do from this end. He said the Junta is cooperating inwardly. Castillo Armas got back to town and there had been a meeting of all the Junta members. Amb. Peurifoy said he would continue to watch the situation.

In reply to Mr. Holland's question Amb. Peurifoy said it looked like a small percentage of the forces, but if Sosa had all those men under his command . . . Amb. Peurifoy said that they were at the other side of the airport. He reported that he had stopped the commercial airlines from going in and no planes had gone in today. Amb. Peurifoy said he would let them know when to start going in again.

Mr. Holland asked if Col. Sosa is supporting

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REVIEWED BY Peurifoy DATE 11/9/82

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Peurifoy said it started this morning when 2 cadets were supposed to have been killed. He said the Army said their national pride had been offended. Amb. Peurifoy thinks there may be something deeper than that. He said the brother of Col. Sanchez and Col. Diaz, the secretary, were in on it.

Amb. Peurifoy said the good thing is that the Junta is sticking together, i.e., Castillo Armas and Monzon. Amb. Peurifoy had seen both of them three times today.

Amb. Peurifoy confirmed that if an attack is made it will be made at 7:00 p.m. our time.

Amb. Peurifoy said he would not bother Mr. Holland again unless he had to tonight but would telephone in the morning and send a cable out ~~xxx~~ tonight. Mr. Holland said he would be available either at the office or the Watch Officer would know where to reach him.

Amb. Peurifoy asked Mr. Holland to notify Amb. Willauer that he had seen Mrs. Willauer and that she was all right.

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Mr. Holland telephoned Amb. Peurifoy at 6:30 p.m. to inform him of a press report up here which stated that there was "a Communist uprising at El Progreso". Amb. Peurifoy said there was absolutely no confirmation of that; in fact, they had seen no indication of the Communists being active.

Mr. Holland asked if there was any news yet from the Air Base and Amb. Peurifoy reported there was nothing more yet.

ARA:MKarydakis